Activity 5
Word differences in Cree-Innu

Words, as well as pronunciations, can differ among the Cree-Innu languages. One example of this is the word used to make a negative sentence, which is quite different depending on the language spoken; however, in all the languages the negative word is always placed before the verb.

Instructions:
► Open the Linguistic Atlas found at www.atlas-ling.ca.
► Go to the ‘at the store’ category.
► Select the phrase “I’m not going.”
► Click on each marker on the map and listen carefully.
► When you find the speakers listed below, copy the first word on the corresponding line.

How is the negative word different for each speaker?

Negative
► Caroline Gabriel - Innu - Matimekush _______   ituteian
► Kanani Penashue - Innu - Sheshatshiu _______   tshituteian
► Brigitta Piwas Aylward - Innu - Mushuau _______   nui tshituten
► Thomas Poker - Innu - Mushuau _______ ma nui tshituten
► Silas Nabinicaboo - Naskapi - Western _______   ni-ki-ituhtaan
► Margaret Cox - East Cree - North _______   niki iituhtaan
► Candice Diamond - East Cree - South - Coastal______   nika uhchi ihtuuhten
► Leda Corrigal - Plains Cree _______   nika-itohtān
► Minnie McKenzie - Woodland Cree - South _______   nika-itohtān

There are two negative words: ‘apu’ and variations of ‘nama’. Note that with ‘apu’ a different verb conjugation (the conjunct) is used than with ‘nama’ (the independent) which uses a personal prefix ‘ni/n-’ and a future marker ‘ui’ or ‘ki/ka’.